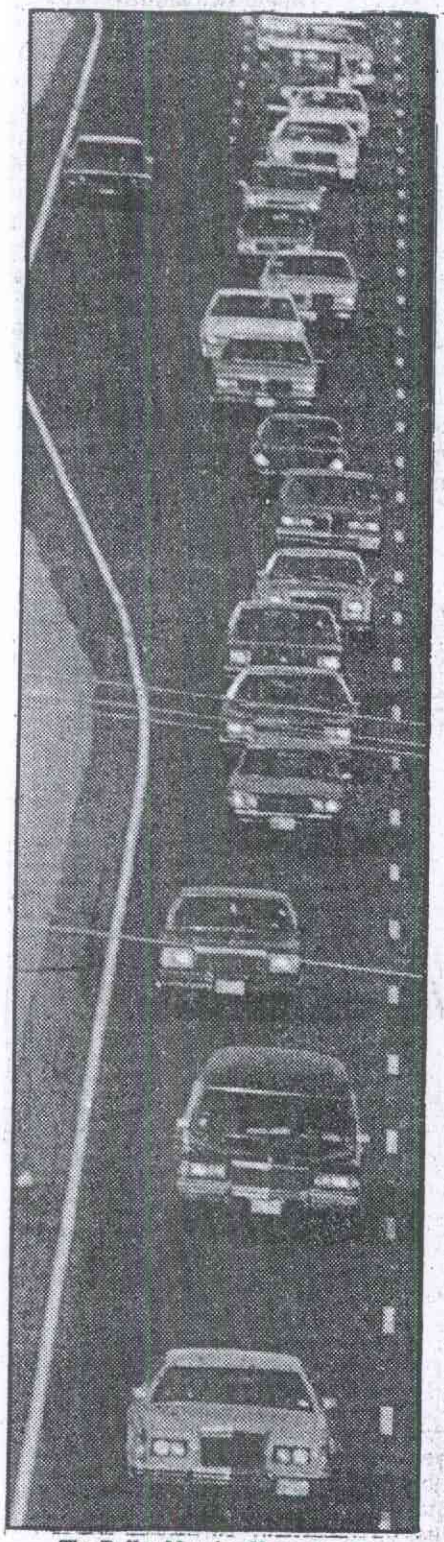

The Dallas Morning News: Geof Payne

Motorcade transports Oswald remains to Baylor Medical Center.

Exhumation fight ends after 6 years

By Ann Atterberry
Staff Writer of The News

A chronology of the 6-year battle that culminated Sunday in the opening of the grave of Lee Harvey Oswald, who was accused of assassinating President John F. Kennedy:

■ Nov. 23, 1975: Briton Michael Eddowes says his book, to be published in January 1976, would claim that the body in Oswald's grave is a Soviet agent.

■ Jan. 10, 1979: Eddowes files suit to exhume Oswald's body from Rose Hill Burial Park in Fort Worth.

■ Feb. 23, 1979: Eddowes wins the right to see Oswald's medical records.

■ June 1, 1979: State Dist. Judge James Wright rejects Eddowes' request to open the grave.

■ Aug. 17, 1979: Eddowes' attorney presents "all the medical inconsistencies" between Oswald's Marine Corps medical records and information on the man arrested in Dallas to Dr. Linda Norton, pathologist with the Dallas County Medical Examiner's office.

■ Aug. 23, 1979: Dr. Norton, convinced of a legally "reasonable doubt" about the identity in the grave, presides at a court of inquest. The Navy Reference Department in St. Louis turns over Oswald's military medical and dental X-rays.

■ Aug. 31, 1979: Dallas County Medical Examiner Dr. Charles Petty asks his counterpart in Fort Worth to "order an exhumation," saying he has "certain information" leading him to doubt the identity of the body.

■ Oct. 19, 1979: Petty calls for the exhumation.

■ Oct. 22, 1979: The Fort Worth Court of Civil Appeals schedules arguments in Eddowes' appeal of Wright's decision.

■ Nov. 21, 1979: The Tarrant County district attorney's office rejects Eddowes' offer to pay a $15,000 premium on a $100,000 indemnification bond for the exhumation.

■ Feb. 21, 1980: Petty reverses himself, saying he will not order the exhumation.

■ May 15, 1980: The court rules that Eddowes lacks "legal standing" to force Tarrant County officials to open the grave.

■ Aug. 13, 1980: Petty, with consent from Marina Oswald Porter, proposes exhumation.

■ Aug. 15, 1980: Oswald's brother, Robert of Wichita Falls, wins a court order blocking exhumation.

■ Sept. 5, 1980: Mrs. Porter tells Wright she wants the exhumation because she believes the grave is empty.

■ Sept. 25, 1980: The Texas Supreme Court upholds 1979 decisions that thwarted Eddowes' initial attempts to open the grave.

■ Aug. 1, 1981: Out-of-court negotiations fail when Robert Oswald rejects a compromise.

■ Aug. 20, 1981: Mrs. Porter files suit to open the grave.

■ Sept. 18, 1981: The court rules that Robert Oswald cannot block the opening of the grave. He appeals.

■ Sept. 23, 1981: Wright issues a 10-day restraining order.

■ Midnight, Oct. 3, 1981: Temporary restraining order expires. Lawyers for Mrs. Porter meet secretly for two hours at Baylor University Medical Center to make final arrangements.

■ Oct. 4, 1981: Workmen open the grave and take the remains to Baylor where pathologists conclude the remains are Oswald. The remains are returned to Rose Hill Burial Park and buried.

Medical team members and other workers watch exhumation. *The Dallas Morning News: Ed Hille*